

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-21. (Withdrawn.)

22. (Presently Amended) A method practiced at a network interface unit (NIU) ~~for communicating data packets over a non-secure network between client devices on~~ directly connected to at least one local area network (LAN), said NIU also being connected to a non-secure node of a second network, which second network is in packet communication with ~~and~~ at least one access node of a secure virtual private network (VPN), the method comprising

receiving data packets from ~~said devices by way of~~ at least one device on said at least one LANs LAN,

multiplexing said data packets into at least one packet data stream,

modifying said packet data streams in a security server in said NIU in accordance with a secure communications protocol by encrypting packets in said data streams and encapsulating resulting encrypted packets, and

providing network destination address information from a DNS server for at least selected ones of said data streams.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein said modifying said packet data streams in a security server comprises modifying said packet streams in an IPsec server.

24. The method of claim 23 further comprising

receiving at least one stream of data packets from said non-secure network,

filtering out packets in said streams of received packets that are not from said VPN network, said filtering being performed by a firewall in said security server,

modifying said packets in said at least one stream by decrypting said packets in said at least one received data stream and decapsulating resulting decrypted packets, said decrypting and decapsulating being performed by said security server,

demultiplexing said at least one stream of received data packets to form at least one demultiplexed stream of data packets for delivery to said at least one LAN.

25. The method of claim 24 further comprising

authenticating client devices on said at least one LAN, and
wherein packets from authenticated client devices on said at least one LAN that
are received at said network interface device are processed as packets received from said
VPN.